UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/509
15 June 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 13 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit the text of a letter dated 12 June 1998 addressed to you by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, on the subject of the continued Turkish aggression against the territory and airspace of Iraq.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 12 June 1998 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter of 31 May 1998, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that the Turkish armed forces are continuing their incursions into the territory of Iraq which began on 22 May 1998, as indicated below:

1. On 31 May 1998, from 8.40 to 11 a.m., the Turkish air force violated the southern part of Iraqi airspace, primarily over the regions of Aqra, Amadiyah and Shaykhan.

2. The incursion extended towards the interior of Iraqi territory, and included the regions of Zakho, Dohuk, Amadiyah, Bikufa, Kami Masi and Khakuk, resulting in ten dead and one wounded among the inhabitants.

The Government of Iraq strongly condemns the acts of aggression and repeated violations perpetrated by the Turkish armed forces, and categorically rejects the pretexts put forward by Turkey to justify the repeated incursions into Iraqi territory.

The pretext of pursuing insurgents against the Turkish Government with a view to putting an end to their activities is designed to allow the Turkish military forces to invade and violate Iraqi territory. Turkey is in the habit of fabricating excuses and vain pretexts to justify its aggressive operations. In parallel, the policy pursued by the Turkish Government, in cooperation with the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, of imposing the illegitimate airborne exclusion zone leads to the creation of an abnormal situation in the north of Iraq.

The repeated acts of aggression perpetrated by the Turkish Government constitute a serious violation of Iraq's sovereignty and the inviolability of its territory, contrary to the principles of good-neighbourly relations and the Iraqi-Turkish Boundary Agreement of 1926.

Iraq, while calling on the Turkish Government to withdraw its aggressive forces immediately from Iraqi territory and to refrain in future from such continuing aggressive practices, assigns to Turkey full international responsibility for these acts of aggression perpetrated within Iraqi territory and for all the consequences that may result therefrom, and rejects all the pretexts put forward. The Iraqi Government reserves the possibility of exercising its internationally recognized legitimate right to decide on the appropriate response to be made to this brutal military aggression and to call for reparations for the damage caused by these repeated Turkish acts of aggression and violations of Iraqi territory and airspace and for the human suffering inflicted on Iraqi citizens as a result of these acts.

In addition, the Iraqi Government again calls on the Government of Turkey to reverse its dangerous policy, which clearly contributes to the maintenance of an abnormal situation in the north of Iraq in cooperation with the Governments

of the United States and United Kingdom, as part of the dangerous plan which involves intervention in the internal affairs of Iraq.

In reiterating Iraq's appeal to Turkey, through you, to respect the sovereignty of Iraq and the inviolability of its territory, I hope that the United Nations will assume its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations and will prevent the recourse to threat and aggression to which my country is being subjected.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq